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Training Children to Use the Dictionary

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HOW many uses for the dictionary do you know? Few teachers realize the scope of information to be gained from it. Thus it is not surprising that many children enter high school with a limited appreciation of the valuable help they have at hand, if they will but use it. Most educators are agreed that somewhere, somehow, sometime, the pupil should acquire definite knowledge of just what information he can get from the dictionary and a reasonable degree of skill in getting such information. But little help has been given so far as to how this information was to be given to the child.

Before taking up any phase of dictionary study with her class, the teacher must first familiarize herself with the scope and general methods of using the dictionary. Flaherty⁸* discusses the scope of the modern dictionary under the following heads: spelling, definition of words, pronunciation, derivation, capitalization of particular words, syllabication and word division, use of hyphen in compounds, forms of inflections of certain words when these forms are irregular or unusual, status of words borrowed from other languages, questions of usage, idioms and idiomatic

phrasing, and proverbial expressions, and allusions.

The Illinois State Course of Study¹ gives an excellent outline of how to use the dictionary which contains, in my opinion, the ultimate objectives in dictionary study and drill.

Having familiarized herself with the scope of the dictionary and the general objectives to be attained in dictionary study, the thoughtful teacher will desire to grade these objectives. Suggested gradation of such dictionary instruction is as follows:

Pre-dictionary Work—Second and Third Grades

Although the dictionary itself should not be placed in the pupil's hands before the fourth grade, there are certain suggestive steps which may be used to prepare him for the more formal dictionary work. These can begin as low as the second grade. They are:

1. The teacher should write the alphabet on the blackboard using the script form of the small letters, and writing them all on one line. A few strips of cardboard on which the alphabet is written in the same way should be provided for the use of pupils who for any reason may be unable to see the alphabet on the blackboard distinctly.

*References are given in the Bibliography, page 150.

2. Have pupils in the second grade buy or make loose leaf note book covers. Paste typewritten or hectographed copies of words learned as first grade vocabulary into this book in alphabetical order, giving attention to *initial letters only*. Do the same with new words learned in the second grade. As the dictionary grows add new words to the book. After the entire list for both grades has been pasted in the booklets, number the words and pages. Have all booklets or dictionaries alike in this respect—the same words in the same order on the same page. This will help the teacher to refer to certain words by number and page.

3. The alphabet should be learned in the third grade if it has not already been memorized incidentally in school or at home. Much individual drill should be given in saying the whole alphabet. The ingenious teacher can motivate this in many ways.

4. Follow this with drill having the child begin with any letter designated by the teacher or other pupils, and completing the alphabet from there.

5. Have pupils arrange given lists of five or six words alphabetically, considering only the initial letter.

6. Much difficulty in using the dictionary in the following grades will be avoided if the primary teachers will make sure the child hears words correctly. Miss Rice says: "Imperfect pronunciation is frequently due to imperfect auditory impressions. A child must first of all hear correctly. It is sometimes necessary to speak or whisper a word very distinctly into a child's ear three or four times—as you would a note in music in order to make him hear it right. When he gets the right sounds in his mind he will pronounce the word correctly. Indistinct hearing is often the cause of incorrect spelling, also. When a child writes *surprise* for the word *surprise* you may be quite sure that he has always heard and pronounced the word as he spells it."

7. Review the sounds of long and short vowels, and their diacritical marks.

8. Memorize the vowels in alphabeti-

cal order, making no mention of *w* and *y*.

Introducing the Dictionary

Fourth Grade

After the child has mastered the eight preliminary steps he is ready to be introduced to the dictionary itself.

1. The first step in introducing the dictionary is that every child must be provided with a copy.

2. After a brief sketch by the teacher of the difficulties experienced by Johnson and Webster in compiling their dictionaries, bring out the points that the chief uses people of this grade will find for this book are to learn (a) how to spell words, (b) how to pronounce them, and (c) what they mean.

3. Teach that alphabetical sequence means more than arrangement by initial letters; that the word *frontispiece* in the dictionary would not be found in the column of words beginning *fa- fo-* etc. They must first find the column headed *fr-* then *fro-* etc. A great deal of drill should be placed on finding letters first and with considerable dexterity. For instance if the class was to find the letter *h* and the pupil opened his dictionary to *p* he should know instantly that he would have to turn toward the front. During this type of drill the following facts will be discovered and learned:

a. While the middle of the alphabet is between *m* and *n*, the middle of the dictionary is between *k* and *l*.

b. The end of the first quarter of the dictionary is in *d*.

c. The end of the third quarter is in *r*.

d. Many words begin with *s*, *c*, and *p* and few with *x*, *z*, *y*, *q*, *k*, and *j*, (five times as many begin with *s* as with *x*, *y*, *z*, *d*, and *k* together).

4. Children continue to keep their own vocabulary books, or dictionaries, into which they put all new words learned as in the previous grades. Now, the booklets are individual projects and are arranged with due consideration for the alphabetical sequence of letters succeeding the initial letter.

5. Teach the children to look for the "catch words" at the top of each page.

Let them discover that these are the first and last words on each page. As speed and dexterity in the use of reference materials are important considerations, explain how this device saves time.

6. Give drill in picking out the number of syllables in a word.

7. Discuss briefly what accent is. Have children tell which syllable is accented in words common to their vocabulary.

8. Teach where to find the key to pronunciation in the dictionary and give some practice in using it in connection with unfamiliar words which come up in reading.

9. This necessitates an explanation of "respelling." Give a number of short words to be looked up, in which they discover the *k* sound of *c* (*kat*) the *j* sound of *g* (*jem*) and the *z* sound of *s* (*haz*) as indicated in the respelling.

10. Give considerable drill in consulting the dictionary concerning words commonly mispronounced by the class. Such words as *often*, *catch*, *which*, *drowned* etc., will probably be included. As the pronunciation of these and similar words is mastered by the class the teacher might write them on the blackboard under some such heading as "Words We Can Pronounce, Try Us," or "We Specialize on These Words." Teachers should keep in notebooks lists of common words most frequently mispronounced by the class to add to this list.

11. Very little work should be given that has to do with getting the meaning of an unfamiliar word from the dictionary, as this is too difficult for the fourth grade. An advanced class may do some simple work in this line under the guidance of the teacher, but should not be referred to the dictionary to learn unaided the meaning of a word.

Training the Children to Use the Dictionary—Grade Five

1. Continue to drill on: (a) exact sounds represented in key words, (b) order of letters in alphabet, and (c) pronunciation of unfamiliar words from dictionary.

2. Training in getting meanings of words may be introduced in the latter part of this grade when the child has mastered the "dictionary mechanics." Briggs and Coffman¹ declare that a child should be sent to the dictionary when ignorance of the meaning of a word causes him to misunderstand a sentence, or when he is puzzled by the exact shade of meaning of a word. Definition and illustration together give exact meaning.

3. The first drills in definition work should be given on well known words which have only a few meanings. These should be carefully chosen by the teacher.

4. Next give practice in finding words with whose meanings the pupils are unfamiliar, preferably words with but a single meaning.

5. Finally look up words which have a large number of meanings, the pupil deciding which one he needs by the context of the sentence in which it occurred to him. Probably this exercise can only begin in the fifth grade. The major emphasis should be reserved for sixth grade. *Wider Use of the Dictionary—Grade Six*

1. Continue the study of words as given by (a) definition, (b) synonym, (c) picture or illustration, and (d) use in sentence. The teachers should explain that the first definition given is a statement of the earliest meaning of a word.

2. Introductory study of more common prefixes and suffixes.

3. Discriminate in use of various synonyms as *good*, *nice* etc.

4. Teach that one should always look up the singular forms of nouns and the present tense of verbs.

5. Explain the term "obsolete" and teach its abbreviation. Children will be interested in the thought that English is a live growing language and that new words are constantly coming into use and old ones dying out. Discuss the use of slang in this connection.

6. Help the pupil to see that a knowledge of rules will not always secure us against errors in capitalization, e. g. the rule for capitalization reads: "Capitalize proper nouns and words derived from

them." Some exceptions to this rule are: *quixotic* (Quixote), *utopian* (Utopia) etc. Electric currents were named from two distinguished investigators, *Volta* and *Ampere*. The adjective *voltaic* calls for a small initial letter whereas *Ampelian* seems to demand a capital *a*. One can settle these doubts by consulting the dictionary when questions arise in the matter of capitalization.

7. Give practice in the use of the supplement or appendix to find data on (a) geographical names (b) biographical names (c) proper usage of more common foreign words and phrases.

8. Call attention to the data given by the dictionary on derivation and history of words. Illustrate with such words as *holiday*, *handkerchief*, *Christmas*, *knavery*, *linoleum*. Have pupils notice that this information is bracketed. Discuss abbreviations referring to the origin of words, as *M. E.*, *O. F.*, and the like.

9. The divided page will need explanation. The rule "Look first above the line for the word you want; if it is not there, look below the line," is a good one at the start. Explain that in the INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY the page is divided into two parts, (1) an upper section containing the main words of the language and, (2) a lower section in somewhat smaller type and narrow columns containing various minor words, foreign words and phrases, abbreviations etc.

10. Give drill in looking up fictitious names, Bible names, Christian names, abbreviations, and foreign words and phrases until they become fairly keen in knowing where to look for these things.

It is to be hoped that having been systematically instructed in the use of the dictionary during these grades, the standard of attainment set for the fourth grade in the Arkansas State Course of Study will be partially achieved by the pupils at the end of the sixth grade. "The dictionary habit should be so well fixed by the end of the fourth year that when a pupil finds a word in his reading of which he does not know the meaning it

should produce such an uncomfortable feeling as to compel him to resort to the dictionary."

What Dictionary Shall We Use?

A short discussion of what dictionary to use may be in order at this point. To quote from Briggs and Coffman¹ — "That every school room should contain an unabridged dictionary goes without saying, at least one state having gone so far as to require this by statute. It is likewise very important that each teacher and pupil should own a dictionary." These authors recommend the NEW INTERNATIONAL because of the constant improvements which the editors and publishers have made, and because of its almost universal acceptance as an authority. WEBSTER'S COLLEGiate is an excellent abridgment of this. Other editions are known as the Academic, High School, Common School, Primary and Handy.

Briggs and Coffman¹ and Martin Flaherty² as well, point out the danger of selecting cheap, unreliable dictionaries. Copyrights on the 1847 edition of Webster have expired, and obscure publishers have flooded the market with volumes which claim to be based upon "Webster's Original Unabridged Dictionary." Frequently these are printed from photographically made plates, and so reproduce all the typographical errors and the blurred type of the 86-year-old book. Moreover, cheap paper and printing make such books almost illegible so far as diacritical marks are concerned, while careless editing make them useless for definition, word division, information as to parts of speech, and indeed for every purpose which a dictionary is supposed to serve.

Briggs and Coffman¹ state that "pupils should own dictionaries not earlier than the fourth grade, nor later than the sixth. Which edition should they buy? In most cases, the largest they can afford. Most people never buy a second dictionary, going through life with the primary book of their childhood!" They recommend that the Collegiate be purchased if possible, and that nothing smaller than the Academic be considered.

Informal Testing of the Use of Books and Libraries

KNOWLEDGE OF THE PARTS OF A BOOK AND THE TABLE OF CONTENTS*

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MORE and more school activities in every system are becoming varied, extending into wider fields of knowledge and requiring, on the part of pupils, a constant use of books and libraries. Because of this children need to be thoroughly at home with books, knowing their parts and their uses.

The development of skill in the use of a reference book or of a library is gradual. Too many times teachers wait until a child is in the intermediate grades or the high school before they teach him to use a book independently. Then, if he is taught at all, he is hurriedly told that a book has an index and a table of contents and that he should use them in getting his lessons. Teachers do not realize that children in the third and fourth grades can learn to use the more simple books in their library if they are taught to do so. Such training will make the use of high school reference books much easier.

Pupils learn to use books through constant practice whenever and for whatever purpose they read. Merely telling a child that a book has an index and that it can be used in finding the answer to a problem does not develop skill. Nor does drill in the reading period do all that can be done. Knowledge developed in this period must be used whenever a child picks up a book to gain information in connection with a school activity.

Along with the gradual development of skills and the constant practice in their use should come a check on the progress that is made. A teacher can learn through informal testing what skills have not been clearly taught to the whole class. The

class can be divided into groups for further drill on the particular skill each group needs. Adequate, carefully planned testing gives large returns to the teacher in that training becomes more definite and specific.

The first step which ultimately leads to the skillful use of books is the knowledge of the essential parts of a book and the use to which each can be put in the gaining of needed information. The parts of a book which a child will use and information about each are as follows:

1. *The title page* gives information concerning the name of the book, the author, the publishing company and sometimes gives the date of publication.
2. *The copyright page* gives the date of the copyright and the name of the person by whom the book was copyrighted.
3. *The preface* is written by someone other than the author and gives information concerning the writing of the book or the author.
4. *The introduction* is usually written by the author and gives the purpose and plan of the publication.
5. *The table of contents* lists the contents of the book in the order of appearance and the page on which each part begins.
6. *The body of the book* makes up the major part of any book.
7. *The index* is made up of topics and subtopics which are arranged alphabetically. Answers to problems can be found readily by looking for the topic in this alphabetical list and noting the

*This is the first of a series of articles by Miss Barker. Others will appear next fall.—Editor.

pages on which the topic is discussed.

8. *The appendix* usually contains tables, graphs, maps, etc., which give added information.
9. *The glossary* is a list of terms or words with their meanings. These words are used in the content of the book and are arranged alphabetically.
10. *The list of illustrations* is a summary of the names of the pictures and other illustrations found in the book and the pages on which they appear.

By examining a book which they use every day the children in the third or fourth grade may be led to recognize the fact that it is divided into parts and that each part has its use. By comparing this book with other books in their library they will see that some parts such as the title page, table of contents, body of the book, and index can be found in almost all books; and that other parts such as the glossary and appendix are found only in books of a certain type.

The title page is an important part of any book because it gives essential information about the general contents and some information about the author, the publishers and the place of publication. This page with the copyright page, is used in skimming a book to determine whether it will be apt to contain information on a topic, whether the author has attained a position of authority on the subject, where the book can be purchased, and whether or not the date of publication is recent enough to be reliable.

The first two of the informal tests that are given below cover these facts about the parts of a book and the title page. It should be noted that the test on the parts of a book is made up of questions similar to those which a child might need to answer in connection with his school work.

In making up the tests on the table of contents, the situations in which this part of the book can be used effectively were kept in mind. Those situations found

most commonly in courses of study and readers of the work-type were as follows:

1. Finding the page on which a story begins. This situation is often found in the literature period.
2. Skimming the contents of a book in order to determine whether or not it contains stories or poems by a certain author or of a certain type.
3. Finding information on topics. This situation presents itself in connection with many school activities.

Children in the third and fourth grade delight in being able to use the table of contents of their books to meet the situations given above. The teacher can give them constant training by asking them to find the page on which the story they are to read begins; by asking them to find their own stories to read to the class; and by asking them to find information on the problems connected with school activities.

The third and fourth tests measure the ability to meet these situations. The results of these tests or of similar ones can be used as a basis for further training.

Ability to Tell the Use of the Various Parts of a Book

Directions to the Pupil: This is a test to see how well you know how to use the parts of a book. Under "A" you will find a list of the different parts that you might find in a geography book. Notice that these are numbered. After each question under "B," write the number of that part of a book which you would use in finding the answer to the question. The first question is answered correctly.

A

1. Title page
2. Copyright page
3. Preface
4. Introduction
5. Table of contents
6. Body of the book
7. Index
8. Appendix
9. Glossary
10. List of illustrations

B.

1. Who wrote this book? _____
2. Are there figures for the 1925 cotton production in this book? _____
3. On what page can I find something about "bananas"? _____
4. Is there a large map of California in this geography? _____
5. What is the correct pronunciation of "Manitoba"? _____
6. Where would you find out whether there is a chapter about New Zealand? _____
7. Where was this book published? _____
8. In what part of the book can I find a graph showing the amount of lumber produced in different sections of the United States? _____
9. In what part of the book can I find a description of St. Louis? _____
10. What plan did the author of the book have when he wrote this geography? _____
11. What does the author of this geography do? _____

Ability to Use The Title and Copyright Pages

Directions to the Teacher: Either furnish the children with mimeographed copies of the title page and copyright page of a book, or ask them to open one of their textbooks to title and copyright pages.

Directions to the Pupil: All of you have before you the title page and copyright page of a book. Use these to answer the questions given below. Write the answers in as few words as possible.

1. Who is the author of this book? _____
2. Write the exact title of the book. _____
3. When was the book published? _____
4. What company published the book? _____
5. Who obtained the copyright for the book? _____

6. From what city may I purchase the book? _____
7. Is this a book of poems? _____
8. Write the word which tells you what kind of a book it is. _____
9. For whom was the book written? _____
10. Write the words which tell you that the author should know something about his subject. _____

Ability to Find the Page on Which a Story Begins

Directions to the Teacher: Furnish each child with a mimeographed copy of a table of contents page containing from 25 to 30 items, or else ask them to open their readers to the table of contents. The test, of course, must be adapted in the matter of titles, to the book used.

Directions to the Pupil: Before you is the table of contents for a reader. Below you will find a list of five stories or poems. After each of them write the number of the page on which you would find the *beginning* of the story.

1. "Leif and Lucky," Albert Lindsay Powlard _____
2. "The Duel," Eugene Field _____
3. "The Seven Sons," Aesop _____
4. "Little Thumb," Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm _____
5. "Foreign Children," Robert Louis Stevenson _____

Answers the questions given below, using the *table of contents*

1. Are there any of Aesop's fables in this reader? _____
2. How many of Grimm's Fairy Tales are in this book? _____
3. Is "The Christmas Wish" by Eugene Field in this book? _____
4. On what pages can I find Indian legends? _____
5. Write the names of Stevenson's poems that are found in this book. _____
6. You want to read a Christmas story to your class. Can you find one in this book? _____

The Use of Encyclopedias in Elementary Schools

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and

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IT IS quite obvious that the question which most people ask when purchasing encyclopedias or reference books for children is this: "Is it within the child's comprehension?" At least one publishing company, realizing the importance of this, stresses the point that in their books subjects which naturally interest the child of ten are written of in such a way that the child of ten may comprehend them, while subjects of interest to the high school student are discussed accordingly. Nevertheless, many topics in natural science, literature and social studies come up for discussion in the classrooms of fourth, fifth and sixth grade children which are of such a nature that they reach up into the seventh, eighth and even high school levels of interest. All educators recognize the principle of teaching the thing that the child is interested in at the time the need is felt. Consequently a child of the fifth grade may express an interest in electricity but will find the material in most reference books beyond his comprehension unless he has had definite teaching in how to glean the important facts from the encyclopedia. Children should be taught of course that the encyclopedia is primarily an accumulation of factual material covering a wide range of subjects.

In discussions with teachers we found that the younger children rely largely on the illustrative material which they find in the encyclopedias. This is to be expected. In the upper grades (fifth and sixth) the more efficient readers contribute information from the reference books usually from memory. Their findings are sometimes given from notes, and in case of question they verify the information by direct reading to the class from

the source of information.

After studying the situation we decided that certain inabilities probably interfered with a wider use of encyclopedic material. Generally we believe that there is close correlation between native ability, reading ability, and ability to locate and absorb pertinent material from reference books. From this standpoint we began our work, confident that raising the level of the child's reading quotient would have a corresponding influence upon his ability to use the various encyclopedias designed for children. A program was worked out in the Bryn Mawr and Dowling Schools of Minneapolis to train pupils in this type of reading and study. The sanction of the publishers of certain encyclopedias was secured for the use of material taken from their books verbatim to be used in tests.

We then prepared a set of fifty lessons, based on encyclopedic material and designed to overcome such difficulties as are common among the children of the intermediate grades. These lessons included work on vocabulary, speed, accuracy of detail, following directions, organization, and total meaning.

The lessons have been given to several hundred children, but too recently for norms to be quoted.

Space and copyright regulations prohibit reprinting the material itself but the following questions and directions which are taken from the pages of the lessons will indicate to the reader the direct use which was made of one set of reference books. The lessons were mimeographed and first given as test lessons with no discussion. On the following day the lesson was used as a teaching aid and discussed in an informal way. In the case

of the vocabulary lessons the new words were drilled upon, not only in their use in these lessons but in other uses as well. Several of the lessons on following directions were designed to meet the needs of children requiring practice in the use of the index. The slower and less skillful reader should be given much training in this phase of the work, for it is the first step in the use of reference books and if he falters and fails to find that which he seeks, his second attempt will be even less enthusiastic.

Samples of the various types of questions and directions which accompanied the paragraphs follow. The paragraphs taken from the encyclopedia are omitted.

*Manufacturing in New York
(Total Meaning)*

Underline the correct answer to each point.

1. What is this paragraph about?
 - a. The size of New York.
 - b. An industry of New York.
 - c. The people of New York.
2. From reading the paragraph I have learned
 - a. that forestry is important in New York.
 - b. that agriculture is the most important industry in New York.
 - c. that the most important industry of New York is manufacturing.
3. From the paragraph I think that the population of New York is large because
 - a. so much manufacturing is done.
 - b. the state covers so much land.
 - c. it is an eastern state.
4. After reading this paragraph I don't believe that
 - a. they have schools in New York.
 - b. they sell much raw material.
 - c. they sell much clothing.
5. I have learned that the manufacturers of New York must use
 - a. very little steel.
 - b. many minerals.
 - c. large quantities of paper.

Indian Reservations (Vocabulary)

After reading the above paragraph, write in the blanks provided, the number of the word that matches the meaning.

Word

1. abandon
2. charges
3. legal
4. boundaries
5. consent
6. induced
7. paternal
8. prohibited
9. permitted
10. residents

Meaning

1. A person committed to another's care
2. Forbidden by authority
3. A separating line
4. Fatherly
5. Allowed
6. People who dwell in a place for some time
7. Relating to law
8. To give up or forsake
9. Influenced or prevailed upon
10. Permission or agreement

The Encyclopedia (Following Directions)

1. The chart above shows the lettering on the volumes of the encyclopedia. The guide letters or words on the back of each volume show the first and last subjects contained in that volume. Draw a line under the word that is the last subject found in Volume 9.

chalk
Monrovia
Osceola
radish
radium

2. On the lines provided, copy the first and last subjects found in Volume 5.

3. Draw a circle around the volume in which three of the titles listed below are found.

Minnesota	Vol. 1	Vol. 7
Africa	Vol. 2	Vol. 8
China	Vol. 3	Vol. 9
DeSoto	Vol. 4	Vol. 10
Chemistry	Vol. 5	Vol. 11
France	Vol. 6	Vol. 12

4. Draw a line through the words not found in Volume 4.

Elementary Research in English

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OFTEN I think of two startling statements made by two professors under whom I studied. This is the substance of the first: In the kindergarten and in the seminar the training is excellent; the work between is all wrong. This is the substance of the second: Children of the upper grammar grades and junior high school age are natural research workers.

Perhaps there was deliberate exaggeration in these comments. Even so, there is likewise a basis of truth, I believe. If both of these statements are fundamentally right, is there any excuse for the major defect in the training given between the most elementary and the most advanced? Certainly the children in the kindergarten and the students in the seminar find out for themselves. Has the world been wrong in assuming that those between must be told? Surely the way children behave about other things — the things the schools do not control — should have taught us better. Surely the boy who simply must take a clock to pieces to see how it works isn't going to be satisfied to write *all right* just because the teacher tells him to. After he has investigated and drawn his own conclusion, he loves to verify it by comparison with the statements of his teacher and of his book.

In the upper grades the child must become familiar with a number of important tools for learning. If the teacher is wise, she will see to it that he approaches a valuable reference work in much the same way as a scientist approaches an unknown substance. If he is encouraged to discover the differences between the organization of the ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA and that of the INTERNATIONAL ENCYCLOPEDIA, he'll get real joy out of using both. Just a hint will be sufficient to set him explor-

ing the Index of the BRITANNICA, and ever after he can use the set more efficiently and rapidly. Sometimes it is important to know the authors of the contributions; yet there are college students who never realize that the ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA gives more than the initials. As sources of general information are presented to them, the children should be encouraged to find out for themselves what are the values of the sources and how these values can be secured most quickly and efficiently.

But not every school has encyclopedias and yearbooks, a teacher may complain. True, but most schools have unabridged dictionaries. Comparatively few people know how to make the fullest possible use of these. Bible in his pamphlet, "Teaching the Use of the Dictionary," lists twenty-five distinct types of information to be found in a good dictionary. Many intelligent adults, if called on suddenly, could name only five or six. Often a teacher in a small school feels woefully handicapped because of the lack of a library, and yet she is not making anything like so much use of the unabridged dictionary as she might. Scores of questions other than those of pronunciation, derivation, and definition are answered there. When was Dante born? Who were the Nibelungs? What is the population of Philadelphia? What is the significance of the suffix *-ly*? What is the area of Texas? Who was Vesta? What does the Union Jack look like? Is the verb form *dove* acceptable? How many *exhilarate* be divided? What is the abbreviation for *pages*? What is the meaning of *status quo*? Consult the dictionary! Use guide words and thumb index. Explore the introduction and the appendix. In both, there's a wealth of material. With the proper encouragement, alert youngsters

will discover what's there and use it gladly. Teachers must be careful not to make the mistake of formalizing the use of this material in cut-and-dried assignments. Hand-to-mouth education is no more to be desired in the sixth and seventh grades than in the kindergarten and in the seminar.

In the mechanics of writing there is abundant opportunity for laboratory work and for other kinds of research. When questions of form arise, the teacher should not answer immediately and finally. She should set the children searching. Should *today* and *tomorrow* be written with or without hyphens? How should long titles be spaced? Exactly where should apostrophes and quotation marks be placed? What nouns really possessive in meaning no longer take the apostrophe? Which is better, *nite* or *night*? *Got* or *gotten*? *Forgot* or *forgotten*? How should a fragment of a line of poetry be indented? Should periods be used after the items of an outline? Don't answer briefly and dogmatically. Our language is a constantly changing organism. Help the children learn to watch, in the best periodicals and books available for evidences of shifting practice and of growth. Help them realize that one example does not test a principle. Help them become cautious and alert about drawing conclusions. When, after collecting and weighing evidence, they are ready to draw tentative conclusions, encourage them to test these by their textbooks. Fortunately most pupils today do not believe that teachers know everything; unfortunately some still believe that everything that appears in print is the gospel truth, and that anyone who questions a textbook is a heretic. That attitude tends to retard intellectual progress. Children ought to question: they ought even to doubt. In other words, they ought to think independently; they ought to investigate. And independent thinking and investigation lead to the wholesome amount of uncertainty and of actual doubt necessary for mental balance and growth.

Independent thinking and investigation are just as necessary in the child's study of literary material as in his use of the sources

of information and of the mechanics of writing. Teachers are too often inclined to hand out to the boys and girls ready-made interpretations and evaluations. That practice does not affect all of the children in the same way, but its results can not be desirable. Some will remember without fully comprehending; others will listen quietly without accepting; still others will resent the fact that they seem not to be expected to think for themselves. Don't tell them "*The Call of the Spring*" is a better or a worse poem than "*Lochinvar*," but try to help them discover all there is in both. Then don't worry if their preference doesn't agree with yours.

A person has not really read a book until he has done some thinking stimulated by the book but not necessarily in accord with it. When he has done that, he has read creatively. Comparing, contrasting, weighing — all these are involved in true reading, and youngsters love to read that way even when they are reading inferior books. If the wrong attitude is not given them by unwise older people, they are likely to be stimulated rather than disturbed by the fact that authors disagree. They are challenged to study more carefully the situations presented and to analyze in real life situations that are somewhat similar. They learn to realize that two authors equally honest and intelligent may treat similar subjects in very different ways, because one is literal minded and the other is idealistic.

During these years, an understanding of the types of writing should be developing gradually in the child as he reads. He should not be forced to memorize definitions of a short story, an essay, a novel, and a drama; but he should be taught to look for the common elements in those selections that belong to the same class.

At least a part of his reading accepted for credit should be left to his judgment. He should be encouraged to find for himself material that enriches the work that he is taking — other stories of Indian life, of pirates, of exploration. Probably he knows old people from whom he might get unprinted versions of ballads or copies

of old newspapers, magazines, diaries, or textbooks. Youngsters love to collect — to seek and to find for themselves. This love can be utilized in regard to literary and factual material as well as in regard to nails, wheels, and copper wire!

Perhaps the term "elementary research" is not satisfactory when applied to the independent investigating that sixth and seventh grade children should do. Perhaps the word "research" should be applied only to advanced and scholarly work. All right! It matters not what word may be used to designate the learning of sixth and seventh grade English through directed investigation; but it is important that there

be some directed investigation. The child of that age is ready for it. In fact, he loves it. If he is not encouraged to study this way, he is likely to become a listless student who accepts indifferently all that he thinks he hears or sees in print. Once a student of mine wrote on a test, "Sheridan wrote the Bible." She had misunderstood me when I said something about "The Rivals," by Sheridan. If I had succeeded in making her the kind who investigates when she does not understand, she would never have made such a mistake. To tell the truth, I'm not sorry she wrote that absurd statement. It woke me up!

TRAINING CHILDREN TO USE THE DICTIONARY

(Continued from page 142)

Bibliography

A. Courses of Study

1. Illinois. Contains splendid outline of the uses of dictionary and methods to be employed.
2. Michigan. Contains rather a comprehensive discussion of dictionary study and some helpful suggestions to be employed.

B. Magazine Articles

1. Linda Rider "Dictionary Delights." In EDUCATION, November, 1924, pp. 142-153. The author brings out the derivation and meaning of such words as *hyacinth*, *calico*, etc. Also gives short outline of work of Samuel Johnson as compared with Noah Webster. An interesting article suitable for eighth and ninth grade reading.
2. Dickinson. "The Importance of Vocabulary in Reading." ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL, March, 1920.
3. J. A. Mazni "Vocabularies" Suggestive of reading problems in relation to vocabulary work. PEDAGOGICAL SEMINARY, September 1919.

C. Books

1. Briggs and Coffman. READING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS Chapter XVII, pp. 173-185. One of the best short discussions of methods of dictionary study to be found.
2. Sherman and Reed TEACHING READING pp. 154-163. Gives some helpful devices.

3. Huey THE PSYCHOLOGY AND PEDAGOGY OF READING. Pp. 299. Although rather old, this book gives one or two helpful ideas.
4. Kendall and Mirick HOW TO TEACH THE FUNDAMENTAL SUBJECTS. Pp. 129-130. Gives a condensed outline of some of the fundamental points in teaching the use of dictionaries.
5. Cowan, Betz and Charters ESSENTIAL LANGUAGE HABITS. Contains several lessons on dictionary study which are suggestive.
6. Howard R. Driggs. OUR LIVING LANGUAGE. Discusses the problem only cursorily, p. 251.
7. Anna L. Rice OUTLINES OF DICTIONARY STUDY 75 pages. 1920. An outline of dictionary work from the fourth to the eighth grades. A teacher's viewpoint, possibly somewhat mechanical, but very suggestive.
8. Martin Flaherty HOW TO USE THE DICTIONARY 108 pages. 1923. This very comprehensive study should be a part of every teacher's preparation for teaching the use of dictionary.
9. Arthur Gilman SHORT STORIES FROM THE DICTIONARY 1886. An interesting discussion of what the dictionary contains and how it was compiled. It is told in such an interesting and simple manner that children as low as fifth grade would be interested and instructed by reading it.

Report of the Committee on the Evolution of Textbooks in Composition*

DORA V. SMITH,

College of Education, University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

THE PURPOSE of this check list is to raise for consideration certain questions of paramount importance in the selection of textbooks in composition. It aims to direct the thought of the inexperienced teacher in a situation in which she must rely upon her own judgment in the evaluation of a textbook. Evidence presented in the bibliography which accompanies the check list, together with the opinion of experts, points to the desirability of an affirmative answer to the questions stated. Lack of objective data concerning the majority of them prohibits a numerical weighting of items. Those considered most important are starred. It is obvious however, that textbooks will vary greatly in the degree to which each of these factors is presented. In order that some numerical basis of comparison may be provided it is suggested that the following procedure be used:

1. Place 3 on the line in front of each item which you can answer with an unqualified "yes" for the textbook under consideration.
2. Place 0 before each question which you must answer with an unqualified "no."
3. If your answer is qualified but nearer "no" than "yes" put 1 in front of the item.
4. If your answer is qualified but nearer "yes" than "no" put 2 in front of the question.

Total your points within each of the sections indicated by the roman numerals. These figures may then be compared with the ratings of other textbooks for the same section. *It is the consensus of opinion among members of the committee that no*

*Presented at the meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English in Milwaukee, November, 1931, for purposes of criticism and suggestion. Comments on its improvement are most earnestly desired by the committee.

textbooks should be considered for adoption which average less than 2 on the points starred.

Checklist of Questions for Consideration in the Selection of a Textbook in Composition

I. The Viewpoint of the Textbook

- *A. Does the author recognize that composition is a social activity?
- *B. Does he recognize the uses of composition in everyday life?

Total _____

II. The Author's style

- A. Is the style stimulating, suggestive, vigorous?
- B. Is there sufficient concrete detail to develop general concepts?
- C. Is the exposition clear, accurate, and simple enough to be readily understood?
- D. Is it suited to the age of child for whom it is intended?

Total _____

III. Proportion and Organization

- A. Does the author give adequate attention to
Motivation of expression? _____
Stimulation of interests and
ideas? _____
Selection and organization of
ideas? _____
Development of power of ex-
pression? _____
Habituation of correctness in
speech and writing? _____
- *B. Does the author give oral
composition the proportion
of time dictated by its promi-
nence in the activities of every
day life?

*Considered most important.

- *C. Does he give letter writing the emphasis demanded by its practical importance in every day life?
- D. Does the author stress the subordinate and contributory function of correctness in speech and writing in relation to the larger purposes of expression?
- E. Does the author organize his material into sectional divisions large enough to stimulate interest, to give perspective, and to promote well-rounded growth?
- *F. Does the author organize materials in such a way as to care for pupils of varying abilities and interests within the same class? Make both teacher and pupil conscious of the ends toward which they are working and the degree of progress attained? Provide for flexibility in adapting the assignments to the individual classroom situation?
- Total _____.

IV. Motivation

- *A. Does the author create in the pupil the desire to express himself?
- *B. Does he identify the composition work of the classroom with the expressional activities of life both within and without the school?
- C. Does he keep before the pupil the purpose of each activity in which he is asked to engage?
- D. Does the author stimulate observation and interest in a wide variety of subjects?
- E. Does he arouse the initiative and originality of the student?
- *F. Does he emphasize the importance of thinking?
- *G. Does he use the social purposes of composition to encourage not merely correct, but clear, vigorous, and interesting expression?
- H. Does he identify his composition activities with actual experience instead of merely setting up series of topics for "theme writing"?
- I. Does he promote additional activities among superior pupils?
- *J. Does he promote progress by offering numerous means of self-criticism, such as Standards for the evaluation of one's own writing? Bases of comparison with the work of others? Means of comparison with earlier achievement?
- K. Does he throw the responsibility for progress upon the pupil himself? Total _____.

V. Activities Proposed:

- A. General Characteristics
 - *Are the activities suggested by the author suitable and interesting to the grades for which they are recommended? Are they representative of a wide range of experience and thought?
 - Are there projects suggested which allow for class, group, and individual activity?
 - Are these projects timely, interesting, and thought-provoking?
 - *Is sufficient direction given for the execution of these projects?
 - Are the tasks specific, not general?
 - Are the illustrations pertinent to the pupils' experience?
 - *Does the book contain suf-

ficient practice material for principles developed?____

Are the practice materials so graded in difficulty as to be easily adaptable to the needs of groups and individuals of varying ability?____

Does the book offer a wide range of choice in suggestions for assignments?____

Does the author stimulate creative writing among pupils capable of more literary achievements?____

Is there plentiful correlation of activities with those of other subjects of study?____

*B. Does the text furnish adequate experience in the following language activities of everyday life?

Announcements____; Book Reviewing____; Conversation____; Creative writing____; Current event discussion____; Debating____; Use of Dictionary____; Explaining or giving instructions____; Gathering information____; Reporting speeches or committee findings____; Gathering and reporting information____; Informal Discussion____; Interviewing____; Letter writing____; Note taking____; Public discussion according to parliamentary form____; Speech making____; Story-telling____.

*C. Does the author offer sufficient aids and devices for

- *Development of vocabulary and use of dictionary?____
- Development of feeling for phrasing?____
- *Development of effectiveness in sentence structure?____
- Selecting and organizing material before writing?____
- Outlining?____
- *Development of well-rounded paragraphs?____

Total____.

VI. The Mechanics of Expression

A. Grammar

*Is the grammatical material motivated by constant relation to actual language situations?____

Does the author provide for measurement and stimulation of progress both for the individual and for the class?____

*Does he provide for individual diagnosis and remedial works?____

*Is there large stress upon sentence sense and sentence structure with repeated review of the topic?____

*Is the content chosen on the basis of function in accord with the findings of scientific investigations?

With relatively large stress on points of difficulty such as verb and pronoun?____

With recognition of points of debatable usage?____

With emphasis upon function not classification.¹____

*Is there ample provision for repeated drill upon a few specific points instead of inadequate drill upon many non-essential?____

*Is the program cumulative with adequate provision throughout for review?____

B. Capitalization and Punctuation

*Are the requirements limited to matters of usage in our

¹ Are classifications of adverbs into adverbs of degree, cause, manner, etc. omitted, and the use of the adverb versus the adjective stressed? Is power to express thought relationships with exactness made more important than ability to label sentences as compound or complex?

THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

own day as revealed by the report of the Minimum Essentials Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English? _____

Are distinctions between required and optional usage clearly made? _____

*Are ample drill materials provided? _____

Is the program cumulative with adequate provision for review? _____

Does the author provide for measurement and stimulation of progress both for the individual and for the class? _____

*Does he provide for individual diagnosis and remedial work? _____

Is there constant provision for use of the skills mastered, in actual writing situations? _____

Total _____.

VII. Physical Format

A. Mechanical Make-up.

Is the textbook a good standard size, easily handled by the pupil? (i.e., roughly $5\frac{1}{2}'' \times 7\frac{3}{4}''$)? _____

Is it easily opened and durable in binding? _____

Has the paper a non-glaze surface? _____

Is it heavy enough to insure that print on the obverse side shall not show through? _____

Are the margins wide enough to insure an uncrowded page? _____

Is the page well-spaced so as to emphasize outstanding points? _____

Are the lines not more than 90 mm. long? _____

Is the type dark, plain, and distinct—not less than 10 point? _____

... B. Attractiveness and Effectiveness of Form

Is the book attractive in appearance? _____

Has it appropriate and effective illustrations? _____

Has it graphic devices for aid in outlining letter form, word derivations, etc.? _____

Are the chapter and section captions clear, brief, well-spaced, interesting? _____

Has the book a usable index? _____

Has it a usable table of contents? _____

Has it a clear and impelling preface, giving the purpose of the author and suggestions for use? _____

... C. Does the copyright date (issued or revised) suggest that the book is recent enough to reflect modern tendencies in teaching? _____

Total _____.

Bibliography of Investigations in the Teaching of English Grammar and Composition

Asker, William—Does Knowledge of Formal Grammar Function? *SCHOOL AND SOCIETY* VII: 109-111, January 27, 1923.

Betz, Annette and Marshall, Esther—Grammar Based on Errors. *THE ENGLISH JOURNAL* V: 491-500, September 1916.

Brueckner, L. J.—Experiment in Methods of Teaching Grammar. *MINNEAPOLIS TEACHERS BULLETIN* No. 6, English, 1925.

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Improving Ability in Capitalization. *ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL* 31: 216-22, November, 1930.

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Research in Elementary Language*

Discussion of a Paper Presented by

HARRY A. GREENE

Bureau of Educational Research and Service
State University of Iowa
Iowa City

(Continued from May)

DISCUSSION

DORA V. SMITH

Associate Professor in Education
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

DR. GREENE has opened up for us in breath-taking fashion the magnitude of the problem of research in elementary school English. Not alone his breadth of vision over the whole field, but his constructive analysis of details and his constructive attack upon the techniques of investigation involved, make his paper a most significant contribution to the stimulation of research in this country today.

I am asked to discuss Section III on problems involving the determination of content and grade placement of the course of study.

Analysis of textbooks and courses of study as an aid to curriculum making in English depends for its value primarily upon the extent to which criteria are available for establishing the validity of the resultant findings. Such studies suggest for the most part the insufficiencies of present practice, giving but little clue as to what should be. For that reason, they would seem of less permanent value than others proposed in this very suggestive report.

Among the many stimulating problems presented by Dr. Greene in the study of curriculum making and grade placement of materials in English, four would seem to merit immediate attention from investigators in the field. The first is the analysis of pupil usage in sentence structure and grammatical forms related to

punctuation and correctness of expression in speech and writing. Positive emphasis upon development of control over sentence structure seems a paramount need in lifting the teaching of English above its present emphasis upon mere correctness in expression. Incidence of use is an important element also in grade placement of materials and forms a basis for further establishment of the error quotient. In addition, it furnishes a much needed means of validating present offerings.

A second problem fundamental to the accurate diagnosis of individual difficulties, to the determination of the relative ease or difficulty of tasks, and to the proper preparation of drill materials is the psychological analysis of variations in a single situation in usage, for instance, the setting off by commas of the name of the person addressed—a problem which involves at least three different teaching elements depending upon whether the term appears at the beginning, the end, or the middle of the sentence. In careful attention to this factor in the presentation of materials, research in English usage has lagged considerably behind that in other subjects of study, notably in arithmetic.

Courses of study today are in pathetic agreement as to the desirability of teaching "that amount of grammar necessary to the establishment of correctness in speech and writing." They are in equally pathetic disagreement as to how much grammar that may be. Curriculum makers, therefore, may well urge immediate consideration of Dr. Greene's proposal to determine the grammatical concepts essential to the teaching of punctuation and sentence structure.

What, for instance, is the relationship of knowledge of subject and predicate to

*Presented before the meeting of the National Conference on Research in Elementary School English, Minneapolis, Feb. 27, 1933.

the development of sentence sense? Textbooks and courses of study uniformly discuss the one in terms of the other; yet what little evidence exists would indicate that the two have little bearing upon each other, that the building of sentence sense is a process of synthesis rather than of analysis. Entire courses in grammar have been based upon available studies of frequency of error, the assumption being that because we know the mistakes pupils make in usage, we know also the grammatical concepts necessary to the correction of those errors. The problem opens an almost untouched field of research in the teaching of English today.

Finally, tremendous significance for curriculum making lies in the slowly accumulating evidence concerning the types of language activities, both oral and written, in which boys and girls engage outside of school and in the various activities of the classroom and extra-curricular offerings. Such an analysis would seem fundamental from several viewpoints: (1) for the establishment of functional centers of expression at the elementary school level, (2) for the light it would throw upon the motives of expression—

the sources of stimulation in the actual experiences of boys and girls and (3) for the study of the relationship of these factors to various levels of intelligence. Studies of this sort may well be the peculiar contribution of those centers less favored than the University of Iowa in the matter of equipment necessary to the carrying out of types of investigation presented earlier.

Dr. Greene's report, fertile of suggestion in many directions, leads one to look to the future also for consideration of those elements of power and effectiveness of expression which transcend mere correct usage and adequate control of sentence structure — elements such as proper sequence and emphasis in thought and the adequate choice of words for a given purpose. Unlimited possibilities likewise suggest themselves for the use of the Iowa Machine for the Transcribing of Spoken English in the development of the course of study and of standards of achievement in oral English, lack of which at the moment makes impossible any authentic evaluation of instruction in that fundamentally important branch of English expression.

NOTE: Discussions by Dr. Robert C. Pooley and Dr. Percival M. Symonds will appear in the September number.



Editorial

Supplementary Skills

After mastering the preliminary skills necessary to learning, those which relate to reading and to writing, there remain certain other abilities that must be acquired if the individual is to continue his education whether in school or outside.

One of the most important of these, the use of reference material, is treated from several angles in this number. Miss Vera E. Pickard gives an excellent outline of training in the use of the dictionary on page 139. Miss Raddatz and Miss McAlister describe their experimental work with encyclopedias on page 146, while Miss Turner, page 148, sets forth the advantages of "directed investigation" as a teaching device. On page 143 appears the first of a series of articles by Miss Vilda Barker on "Informal Testing of the Use of Books and Libraries." Here we find discussed a second, and closely related skill—the competent use of books.

It is of the greatest importance that these skills be developed in the grades. Without them independent learning must become a process of blind fumbling, with a consequent loss of impetus. There remains another subject, however, almost completely neglected in elementary schools, which nevertheless goes hand in hand with

expertness in the use of reference aids. It is note taking.

Most elementary school librarians, and for that matter, not a few high school and college librarians, have seen students painfully copying down, word for word, long extracts to which their teachers have referred them. The youngsters' entire ignorance of note taking techniques is scarcely less astonishing than their pathetic willingness to do what they suppose the teacher expects of them. Whatever expertness they do eventually develop in making notes is too often a result of years of trial and error.

The subject is a large one, of course, and capable of expansion, in high school years and above, into all the complexities of outlining, briefing, and argumentation. But there is a place and an urgent need in elementary schools for instruction in the fundamental processes of getting the gist of a selection, and setting it down in a way that will bring the original to memory. A basis for instruction in note taking may be found in the various reading comprehension tests, but the subject is important enough to receive direct instruction. For without note taking, reference work loses half its value.

Reviews and Abstracts

JOYCE JOPLIN

Children's Room,
Detroit Public Library

COMPTON'S PICTURED ENCYCLOPEDIA. Edited by G. S. Ford and others. 15 volumes. 1932 revised edition.

The editors' aim has been to produce "an encyclopedic, alphabetically arranged survey of the whole field of knowledge, presented with such freshness and vividness and embellished with such a wealth of illustration that it should be as readable as a story book, without anywhere sacrificing completeness or accuracy." The result is an excellent reference tool for grade and junior-high school pupils, as well as a browsing book for all ages.

Each volume covers at least one letter, with separate pagination, and the index for that volume at the back. The index contains many additional entries, besides definitions which make it a dictionary as well as a brief encyclopedia in itself. Useful lists appear here also, as abbreviations and anniversaries, following those headings.

Accompanying large subjects in the body of the work are reference outlines for organized study, with references to pages elsewhere containing further material, and bibliographies.

There are a few rather poor colored illustrations, many, but not enough, maps, and very many very excellent half-tone illustrations. The retold stories and abbreviated plots of books are regarded by some as regrettable, but children who live in isolated places, where the original stories are not available, are likely to find these a fortunate inclusion. It is, in fact, these children with few advantages who will derive the greatest benefit from such a reference set as this.

The binding, paper, type and pictures are all good, and the set is calculated to last long and wear well, possibly almost too long and too well in these days when facts and statistics are so soon incorrect and incomplete.

THE BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE, The Children's Encyclopedia. Edited by Holland Thompson and Arthur Mee. 20 volumes. 1931 edition.

This set is for general reading and wide education rather than for ready reference. Each volume contains information which falls into specified groups, so that to become acquainted with the whole field of animal life, for instance, one must consult

the section on animal life in each volume. The idea is that children cannot concentrate for long and are more likely to read straight through a volume, taking all subjects in their stride, if those subjects are offered in small doses. The result is that, as there is no alphabetical arrangement, the index must be consulted every time the set is used for reference purposes. For young people this is tedious in the extreme. But for pleasure reading the method certainly has advantages.

The index volume provides a general index, giving brief facts as well as page references, and a poetry index, which is most useful. The poems are all rather well seasoned, as are also the retold stories from many sources, frequently not mentioned. The index volume also gives the texts of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Then follows a detailed school subject guide. Graded courses of study as given in the schools, outlines, questions and tests. The aids in this volume make it possible for children in poor school districts to keep somewhat near the standards of places better equipped.

The set is well produced, the type is clear and the pictures are particularly good. There is an index to illustrations of fine arts, and there are many color plates, and some music to songs. The pagination is continuous. While not as necessary to schools as either of the other two sets it is probably more popular in the home, and equally useful in a library.

THE WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA. Edited by M. V. O'Shea. 18 volumes. 1933 edition.

Here is an encyclopedia which is rather more mature than Compton's. It will last through high school, but the younger children won't find the pleasure reading that Compton's provides.

There are excellent illustrations, good maps, and many reproductions of famous pictures, and of some well-known illustrations of famous books. The colored plates of birds, beetles, etc. are good, but colored scenes from other lands are only fair.

Large subjects are followed by lists of related topics, an outline for study, and a list of questions. Each volume covers at least one letter, pagination is continuous, and the insertion of many cross references dispenses with the need for an index. In

this work there are no retellings of stories, though the themes of many well-known books are given.

The last volume has a classification of knowledge, plans of lessons and guides to study, which refer to pages through the work, and bibliographies. There are also questions to answer and suggestions for making and doing things connected with the topic.

In order to bring this edition up to date and yet keep it within the exact space occupied by the earlier one, there has been quite a deal of rewriting,

some condensing, and frequent substitution of a new fact for an old one. Whether the sacrifice of the older information is always justified is a question.

In the years between an earlier edition and this one there was issued a year book giving recent information and introducing new topics. It is to be presumed that the same method will be followed again, saving owners from the expense of purchasing a new edition too soon, and yet giving them the latest information at low cost.

FORM OF DISCOURSE AND THE SENTENCE

A LETTER*

Temple University
Philadelphia

My dear Mr. Certain:

* * * I was interested very much in your comments upon my paper. With haste I inform you that I am not recommending the artificial organization which seems to have been implied in my article but only suggesting that when activities or other forces operate to produce writing, which assumes any one of those forms, the situation that I described applies and should be considered * * *

Sincerely yours,

J. C. Seegers

*In reply to the editorial entitled "Scientific Scrutiny of the Sentence" which appeared on page 79 of the March Review.

TESTING THE USE OF BOOKS

(Continued from page 145)

7. Your class is reading poems about winter. On what page of this book could you find one you could use?

Ability to Locate Material on a Given Topic

Directions to the Teacher: This test applies especially to work-type readers. Accordingly, the test should be adapted to the particular reader in use. Each child may then use the table of contents of his own book in answering the questions. If the children do not have such readers, furnish them with mimeographed copies of the table of contents of such a book.

Directions to the Pupil: Here is a table of contents for a reader. After each of the topics given below write the number of the page on which you can find a lesson which might tell you something about that topic.

1. Health rules	-----
2. How people live in the Sahara desert	-----
3. The raising of bananas	-----
4. The food of the hawk	-----
5. The time of year that flowers pollinate	-----
6. Homes of the Colonial children	-----
7. When you should cross the street	-----
8. Why we celebrate Christmas	-----

THE USE OF ENCYCLOPEDIAS

(Continued from page 147)

1. December
2. Don Quixote
3. Delaware
4. Dickens
5. Dogwood
6. Dairying
7. Duquesne
8. Dachshund

5. In the space provided, write the number of the volume where each of the items below may be found.

1. Radio _____
2. Italy _____
3. World War _____
4. Constitution of the United States _____
5. Tutankhamen _____

THE EVOLUTION OF TEXTBOOKS IN COMPOSITION

(Continued from page 154)

YEARBOOK of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, 1923.

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Ruhlen, Helen and Pressey, S. L.—*A Statistical Study of Current Usage in Punctuation*, THE ENGLISH JOURNAL XIII: 325-331, May, 1924.

Segel, David and Barr, Nora R.—*The Relation of Achievement in Formal Grammar to Achievement in Applied Grammar*, THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH XIV: 401-2, December, 1926. Shepherd, Edith E.—*A Preliminary Experiment in*

After actually using encyclopedic material we find that while much of the material appears beyond the comprehension of fourth and fifth grade children, nevertheless, after a period of definite training, they are able to absorb a surprising proportion of the information.

Teachers need to be more conscious of the necessity for this type of training in the intermediate grades. Their attention should be directed to the fact that no better material for silent reading exercises and test lessons is available than that found in the encyclopedias and reference books approved and endorsed by the American Library Association.

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